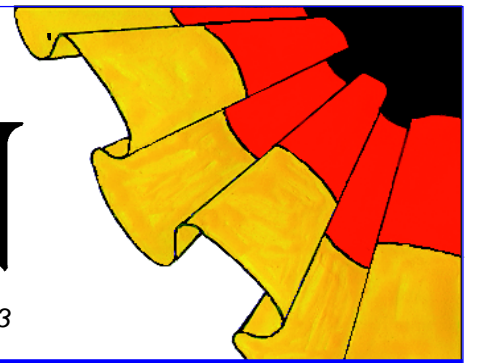


THE CITIZEN

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Stuttgart, Bad Aibling, Oberammergau and Garmisch, Germany

SOCEUR snares flag football crown

Upsets previously unbeaten Marine squad en route to season-ending tournament title

Story & photo
by Hugh C. McBride

As the National Football League approached its season's midpoint, the 6th Area Support Group's own "gridiron greats" brought playoff intensity to Panzer Kaserne during the community's two-day unit-level flag football championship tournament.

"March Madness doesn't have anything on this," said 6th ASG Sports Director Bryant Searcy. "This is where it's at."

Ten teams from the 6th ASG (nine representing Stuttgart-area units and one from Bad Aibling) squared off in a hard-fought single-elimination tournament Nov. 1 and 2.

"All the Stuttgart [unit-level] teams participated in the tournament, and we invited the winner of the Bad Aibling leave to come up here and play, too," Searcy said.

When the dust and the mud finally cleared shortly after 4 p.m. Nov. 2, Special Operations Command, Europe had claimed the championship trophy.

Not to discount its title-game victory over U.S. Air Forces in Europe Mission Support Squadron, but SOCEUR's biggest win may have come in the semifinal round, when it handed the previously-undefeated Marine Corps Forces Europe team its first loss of the 2003 season.

"That was a big upset," Searcy said. "MARFOREUR was the only undefeated team [during the regular season], but SOCEUR played a great game."

For the runners-up from USAFE MSS, the frustration of their season-ending loss was tempered by the realization that they had advanced farther than their regular-season record indicated they would.

**6th Area Support Group
Unit-Level Flag Football
Championship Tournament**
(Panzer Kaserne, Nov. 1 and 2)

1st Place
Special Operations
Command, Europe

2nd Place
U.S. Air Forces in Europe
Mission Support Squadron

3rd Place
6th ASG Medical/Dental Clinic

*SOCEUR defeated USAFE MSS,
26-6, in the title game.*

*Medical/Dental beat
Marine Corps Forces Europe,
24-13, in the consolation game.*

"MSS hung in there and played solid throughout the tournament," Searcy said.

The next opportunity for unit-level athletes in the 6th ASG is basketball, which begins in December.

For information about participating in or officiating any area unit-level sports, call the 6th ASG Sports & Fitness Office at 430-4512/civ. 0711-680-4512 or e-mail searcyb@6asg.army.mil

For more photos of the flag football tournament see page 15.

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Learn how to keep yourself and your vehicle fit during a cold German winter.

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Stuttgart honors America's veterans with a Nov. 11 ceremony on Panzer Kaserne.



Much like this pass during a first-round contest Nov. 1, the 6th ASG unit-level flag football championship tournament was hard-fought and up for grabs until the very end.